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PRM/ANE FOR EILEEN SEN, EAP/MLS FOR AARON COPE, IO/UNP FOR
PAUL WICKBERG, EUR/NCE FOR ALEX TRATENSEK, EUR/ERA FOR
NICOLE OTALLAH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [BM](#) [EU](#) [EZ](#)

SUBJECT: CZECHS - STRONG SUPPORTERS OF US POSITION ON BURMA

REF: A. STATE 142626

[1](#)B. PRAGUE 1124

[1](#)C. PRAGUE 1086

[1](#)D. PRAGUE 1060

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: In addition to the consistent, strong Czech engagement within the EU on Burma, the GOCR is very active on the bilateral front in support of democracy and human rights there. On October 9 the GOCR announced assistance (2M Crowns or 100,000 USD) for the "victims and the relatives affected by repressions in Burma." Czech Director of Human Rights and Transition Policy, Gabriela Dlouha, affirmed Czech government support and involvement in shaping the EU GAERC conclusions released on October 16 "condemning the brutal crack-down on demonstrators in Burma" as well as the additional restrictive measures on timber and mining of minerals. The Czechs continue to look for opportunities to be helpful in Burma, which they have identified as one of their democracy promotion "priority" countries. End Summary.

Refugees, Political Prisoners, Democracy Promotion

[1](#)2. (SBU) The Czech government has been following, and working to improve the situation in Burma since the mid-90s. Their support essentially falls into two main categories - humanitarian assistance and democracy promotion. This most recent announcement of 2M Crowns falls into the category of humanitarian assistance and it is their third allocation of resources for refugees this year alone. Last year they notably worked through the NGO "Thailand Burma Border Consortium," with which the USG also works on Burmese refugees in Thailand, and the Czechs provided 3M Crowns (150,000 USD) in assistance.

[1](#)3. (SBU) With respect to democracy promotion, Dlouha's department of Human Rights and Transition Policy monitors the status of democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms in priority countries, such as Burma. They also identify and fund projects to reinforce democratic institutions (refuels B and D). In Burma they provide assistance primarily through the reputable Czech NGO "People in Need," which has been working in Burma since 1997. This last year, they have also begun working with "Burma Center Prague," which is a relatively new NGO lead by a Burmese woman. Currently the MFA is targeting their assistance to political prisoners and their families, media (Democratic Voice of Burma) and transitional projects in support of civil society.

Public Messages

[1](#)4. (SBU) The Czechs are not reluctant to speak publicly about

the situation in Burma. In addition to their work within the EU to craft strong messages in support of the demonstrators, the Czech government has issued three strong statements since August expressing support for the rights of the demonstrators and condemning the use of force against them. They have also expressed a willingness to work with the US at the UN on resolutions, such as the proposed resolution "condemning the use of rape as an instrument of state policy" (reftel C), particularly because they sought to draw attention to the situation in Burma.

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